

Hawaii MARINE

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3/3 honors Kilo warriors

Cpl. Rich Mattingly
Combat Correspondent

FORWARD OPERATING BASE MEHTAR LAM, Afghanistan — Third Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, America's Battalion, honored two fallen heroes in a memorial service, May 13.

Kilo Company stood tall under the brutal afternoon sun, the wind whipping up a storm of dust around perfectly aligned desert boots while Lance Cpl. Nicholas "Nick" C. Kirven and Cpl. Richard "Ricky" P. Schoener's names were read on the final roll call.

The ceremony was part and parcel of Marine Corps tradition — honoring Marines lost in combat the same way they have been honored for

over a century.

Rifles were inverted by their squad members and set into the ground, bayonets first; Kevlars rested on the buttstocks and empty boots locked at attention.

After a prayer from America's Battalion Navy Chaplain (Lt Cmdr.) Paul Evers, the company stood at parade rest and listened to eulogies read by Marines from 2nd Platoon.

"In my brief time in the Marine Corps, I have had the opportunity to work with some outstanding Marines," said Sgt. Robert Campbell, the Marines' squad leader. "Lance Cpl. Kirven and Cpl. Schoener were the best. These Marines made the ultimate sacrifice to defend the liberties we so often take for granted."

Campbell continued, "Nick and

Ricky were the driving force behind 2nd Squad. They always made a bad situation into a positive one."

He then shared a story of when both Marines had come to the aid of the squad's spirits.

"During a three-day mission in the village of Paitak, the weather was as bad as it could possibly be," he said. "After drenching us with persistent rain, it decided to start snowing. The platoon decided to move to a nearby house to avoid hypothermia. We were still miserable, but Ricky and Nick started to tell stories to brighten everybody's mood. Their stories helped us forget how bad things were."

"Their positive attitudes always

See **FALLEN**, A-8



Cpl. Rich Mattingly

Marines from Kilo Company, 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marines, pay their final respects to Lance Cpl. Nicholas "Nick" Kirven and Cpl. Richard "Ricky" Schoener, May 13, at Forward Operating Base Mehtar Lam, Afghanistan.

SRT shows no apprehension



Cpl. Megan L. Stiner

Members of the Special Reaction Team, Marine Corps Base Hawaii, Kaneohe Bay, apprehend Staff Sgt. Jon Jerome, SRT team commander, who was acting as an enemy combatant after entering a room filled with O-Chlorobenzylmalononitrile gas, also known as tear gas, Monday. The Marines participated in the gas chamber exercise as part of a monthly week-long training evolution. The mission of the SRT team was to enter into a room filled with an unknown chemical, clear the room and locate and apprehend any combatants and evacuate the room.

Base wins SecNav's pollution prevention award

Carolyn Irvin

Environmental Compliance and Protection Department

The Environmental Compliance and Protection Department, Marine Corps Base Hawaii, Kaneohe Bay, recently received the Secretary of the Navy Environmental Award for Pollution Prevention. Carolyn Irvin, Pollution Prevention Program manager accepted the award on behalf of the department during a ceremony held in Washington, D.C., at the U.S. Navy Memorial and Naval Heritage Center on May 3.

According to Irvin, MCB Hawaii has a proud tradition of being a model steward of the naturally and

See **AWARD**, A-8

CSSG-3 Marines support Operation Alaskan Road

Air Force Maj. Richard C. Sater

U.S. Air Force Reserve

CAMP WY-WUH, ANNETTE ISLAND, Alaska — "From the halls of Montezuma to the shores

of ..." southeast Alaska?

That's how the song goes for 73 Marines deployed to Annette Island, from the 3rd Force Service Support Group, in support of Operation Alaskan Road.

About two-thirds of the detach-

ment is assigned to the 9th Engineer Support Battalion, Camp Hansen, Okinawa, Japan, and the remaining third assigned to Combat Service Support Group 3, Marine Corps Base Hawaii, Kaneohe Bay.

The Marines should have badges that all them access to everything during Operation Alaskan Road. They can be found manning heavy equipment all along the road, building bridges, servicing vehicles, filling potholes, cooking meals in the camp dining facility, or issuing equipment from the supply shop.

The arrival of the Marines nearly doubled the camp's population. The FSSG-3 group is the first of the large-scale engineer groups to work this year's Alaskan road. And it's working.

Check out the mechanics at the maintenance shop at Hemlock Bay. Challenges include

See **CSSG-3**, A-6



Air Force Maj. Richard Sater

Sgt. Nathaniel Campbell (from left), Pfc. David Ridge, Pfc. Tyler Harder and Pfc. Josh Daugherty, all assigned to Combat Service Support Group 3, Marine Corps Base Hawaii, Kaneohe Bay, break down a bridge at Camp Wy-Wuh, Annette Island, Alaska, in support of Operation Alaskan Road.

America's Battalion remembers spirit of brothers

Cpl. Rich Mattingly
Combat Correspondent

FORWARD OPERATING BASE MEHTAR LAM, Afghanistan — The squad and platoon-mates of two Marines killed in a bloody clash with insurgents, May 8, gathered throughout the past week to reflect on memories of their fallen brothers.

Sitting in a tent where just a week prior they had prepared for their latest mission with Cpl. Richard "Ricky" Schoener and Lance Cpl. Nicholas "Nick" Kirven, the mood among the squad-mates was somber, the sounds of battle still ringing in their ears.

From the rafters still hung the American flag they had all signed, two signatures slightly more noticeable than the rest, as afternoon light filtered through the fabric. There was a lingering sense that the tent should have been filled with laughter and talk of what the Marines planned to do when they returned home.

However, close to the surface their feelings of loss and grief were the Marines of Kilo Company only spoke of the positive light they said their friends Nick and Ricky brought to everything they did. As they took turns telling stories and sharing memories, they said that they will remember them as friends, heroes, and as Sgt. Charles Bennett, Kilo Company squad leader emotionally recalled, "The two finest young Marines I have ever seen."

"They were happy-go-lucky guys," said Cpl. Jason Valencia, rifle team leader with 2nd Platoon, 2nd Squad, Kilo Company, 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marines. "They were both the kind of Marines who were serious enough to always do their job or give you

See **BROTHERS**, A-9



Cpl. Rich Mattingly

Lance Cpl. Nicholas "Nick" Kirven (left) and Cpl. Richard "Ricky" Schoener, team leaders with Kilo Company, 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marines, pose in a picture taken during their deployment to Afghanistan. The two Marines lost their lives in combat, May 8, in Laghman Province, Afghanistan.

NEWS BRIEFS

Silent Auction Slated for Today
Support your community through participation in a silent auction to benefit an educational fund for the seven children of the Marines who perished in a helicopter crash in Iraq on Jan. 26. The auction will be held today from 4 to 8 p.m. at The Officers' Club on Kaneohe Bay. Proceeds will be directed to the Armed Services YMCA, for distribution to the children's educational funds. Items have been donated by organizations such as Hilton Hawaiian Village, Wyland Galleries Makani Kai Helicopter Tours, Luana Hills Golf, Honolulu Zoo, Star of Honolulu, Hilo Hattie, Lowe's, Germaine's Luau, Global Village, Too Good Kayaks, GAP Inc., and various other businesses, restaurants and spa services. The auction is hosted and organized by the VP-9 Officers Spouses' Club, Marine Corps Base, Hawaii, Kaneohe Bay. For more information, call 206-7112.

MCCS Facilities Close for Inventory
The Marine Corps Exchange will close its distribution center for inventory Thursday. Gas 'N' More will also be closed Thursday at 5 p.m. for inventory. Starting Friday at 6 p.m., Nutri-Fit and the Marine Corps Exchange will close for inventory. June 4, the Marine Corps Exchange Annex will close at 4 p.m. and the 7 Day Store and Package Store will close at 9 p.m. Look for more temporary closure announcements next week as various Marine Corps Community Services facilities prepare for this annual procedure. For information call 254-7539.

New Base Chapel Dedication
The new Base Chapel dedication will be held at 10 a.m. Friday. Retired Navy Chaplin (Capt.) and now Bishop Joseph W. Estabrook, Navy Capt. Steve Linehan, and former and current Marine Corps Base Hawaii, Kaneohe Bay command chaplains, will help formally dedicate the new facility. All hands are invited to the ceremony and post-ceremony reception at the new chapel's lanai. Adjacent parking is available at Mokapu Mall.

Chosin Few Window Dedication
"The Chosin Few" memorial service and stained-glass window dedication by Brig. Gen. George J. Trautman III, commanding general, Marine Corps Base, Hawaii, Kaneohe Bay, and Deputy Commander, Marine Forces Pacific will address the Aloha Chapter and mainland members of the Chosin Few at The Officers' Club, over lunch, to provide an update on USMC actions in the Middle East. The memorial service and window dedication will begin at the new Chapel at 2 p.m., Friday.

HMT-301 Decommissioning
Decommissioning of Marine Helicopter Training Squadron 301 in a ceremony to be held between Hangars 101 and 102 on Marine Corps Base Hawaii, Kaneohe Bay. For historical information about HMT-301, visit www.globalsecurity.org/military/agency/usmc/hmt-30.

Read the Hawaii Marine Online
To access the *Hawaii Marine* online, log on to www.mcbh.usmc.mil and click on the "Hawaii Marine" link.

Important Phone Numbers	
On-Base Emergencies	257-9111
Military Police	257-7114
Child Protective Service	832-5300
Fraud, Waste, Abuse & EEO	257-8852
Business Management Hotline	257-3188
Pothole & Streetlight Repair	257-2380

Assumption of Command
Col. Michael O'Neal, the new Marine Corps Base Hawaii, Kaneohe Bay, deputy commander, will assume command of MCB Hawaii from Brig. Gen. George J. Trautman III, in a ceremony to be held at the Pacific War Memorial, Friday, at 5 p.m.

New medals created for OIF, OEF veterans

Cpl. Megan L. Stiner
Combat Correspondent
Two Marines from Headquarters Battalion received awards for their service overseas, during the Commanding General's Morning Colors ceremony, May 20, on Marine Corps Base Hawaii, Kaneohe Bay. Cpl. Bruce St. John, military working-dog handler, and Cpl.

Jason O'Day, recently returned to MCB Hawaii after being deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan in support of operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom. St. John was presented with the Iraq Campaign Medal for his services in Camp Fallujah, Iraq. O'Day was eligible for the Afghanistan Campaign Medal or the Global War on Terrorism

Expeditionary Medal for his services in Operation Enduring Freedom. He accepted the latter. The Afghanistan and Iraq campaign medals were created to recognize military members who directly supported OEF between Oct. 24, 2001, and a date to be determined or OIF from March 19, 2003, and a future date yet to be determined. Previously, service members

deployed to Afghanistan and Iraq were awarded the GWOT Expeditionary Medal. Those who served during the above timeframes still qualify for the GWOT Medal, but are now also eligible for a new campaign medal as well. According to the ALMAR, the new campaign medals cannot be worn with a GWOT Medal, awarded for the same period of service in Iraq or Afghanistan.

'Click it' campaign returns

Provost Marshal's Office
Marine Corps Base Hawaii
"Click It or Ticket," is the nationwide law enforcement effort to encourage drivers as well as passengers to wear their seat belts. The campaign is not only a concentrated two-week effort, but also an ongoing program to encourage all drivers and passengers to "buckle up." Marine Corps Base Hawaii, Kaneohe Bay, Military Police Department and Base Safety Office personnel are setting up checkpoints throughout the base at various times to conduct seat belt and child restraint enforcement checks. In the past week, vehicle

occupants who were observed not wearing their seat belts were stopped and given a verbal warning. Unlike last week, this week, violators will be cited for not wearing a seat belt. A first offense will result in a seven-day suspension of base driving privileges, loss of two points, and mandatory attendance of a four-hour remedial driving class which focuses on proper use of safety restraints. A second offense can result in a violator receiving a one-month suspension of base driving privileges, attending the

remedial driving class and another two-point deduction, while a third offense may yield a six-month suspension of base driving privileges, attending the remedial driving class and a deduction of two more points. Due to the number of vehicles traveling on roadways and highways everyday, traffic accidents will happen and are sometimes unavoidable. Most injuries and deaths caused by traffic accidents could be prevented if the driver and passengers follow one simple rule — "buckle up."

During the 2004 "Click It or Ticket" campaign, 4,939 vehicles were checked for seat belt and child restraint usage, resulting in 32 citations. Ninety-four percent of vehicle occupants were wearing seat belts, which was nine percent higher than the state average. As a small token of appreciation, the MCB Hawaii Base Safety Office will pass out free movie passes from MCCS to drivers and passengers who are wearing their seat belts. The driver of a vehicle is overall responsible for ensuring all occupants of that vehicle are properly restrained. The "Click It or Ticket" campaign will continue through June 5.



Lunch with assistant CMC



Lance Cpl. Cox has lunch with Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps Gen. William L. Nyland, May 17, at Anderson Hall. Marines of Marine Corps Base Hawaii, Kaneohe Bay, got the opportunity to sit down and have lunch with the assistant commandant of the Marine Corps, who talked with them about the Marine Corps and the opportunities it provides. The visit was a rare chance for Marines to speak with Gen. Nyland in a more relaxed environment.

PMO expands locations for decal issuing

Provost Marshal's Office
Marine Corps Base Hawaii
The Provost Marshal's Office has expanded the locations where personnel assigned to Marine Corps Base Hawaii, Kaneohe Bay, or military retirees living on Oahu can receive Department of Defense vehicle decals. DoD decals will now be available during normal working hours at the following locations. On Kaneohe Bay: Pass and Registration Office, Building 1637 and the

Provost Marshal's Office Building 1096. On Camp H. M. Smith: Provost Marshal's Office, Building 601. Individuals should use their units as the primary source for nonresident forms; however, they may also receive them from the Provost Marshal's Office at the above locations. Individuals must show a leave and earnings statement to verify state of residence in order to receive a non-resident form. Prior to obtaining a decal, authorized

personnel must present the following documents: valid common access card, armed forces identification card or family member identification card, valid state driver's license, current vehicle registration in name of the person applying for a decal, proof of insurance, and a current Hawaii state vehicle safety inspection. For more details call K-Bay at 257-2103 ext. 341 or Camp H. M. Smith at 477-8734.



Weekend weather outlook

Today	Saturday	Sunday
Day — Partly cloudy with temporarily mostly cloudy skies with isolated rain showers in the morning, northeasterly winds at 8-10 mph with gusts to 15 mph Night — Partly cloudy with isolated rain showers, easterly winds at 8-10 mph High — 82 Low — 73	Day — Partly cloudy with temporarily mostly cloudy skies and isolated rain showers, northeasterly winds, 12-14 mph, gusts to 20 mph Night — Partly cloudy with temporarily mostly cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers, easterly winds at 10-12 mph High — 82 Low — 71	Day — Partly cloudy skies with isolated rain showers in the morning, easterly winds, 10-12 mph with gusts to 20 mph Night — Partly cloudy with temporarily mostly cloudy skies with isolated rain showers, easterly winds, 8-10 mph High — 81 Low — 71

Hawaii MARINE

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Rocking the desert

Charlie Battery, 1/12, returns from hard-hitting tour to Iraq

Gunnery Sgt. Claudia LaMantia
Public Affairs Chief

Back from months of sustained combat in Fallujah, a handful of men from Battery C, 1st Battalion, 12 Marines sat in a warm office surrounded by a tropical setting and recalled some of what they saw.

The unit left Hawaii in July 2004 for Okinawa as part of a regularly scheduled deployment. They boarded three amphibious ships from Essex Amphibious Ready Group and traveled with the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit, Special Operations Capable, as part of the Battalion Landing Team, 1st Battalion, 3rd Marines, and headed toward the Middle East where their mission would grow to take part in Operation Iraqi Freedom III.

The Essex ARG, home-ported in Sasebo, Japan, is comprised of the USS Essex (LHD-2), USS Juneau (LPD-10) and USS Harpers Ferry (LSD-49).

During mid-August 2004, they arrived in Kuwait to sweltering 120 degree breezes. In the vast desert of Udairi range, they trained as a provisional rifle company, according to Staff Sgt. Joshua Baeza, 30, communications chief and Pico Rivera, Calif. native. They could have been there as a reinforcement unit and the air was filled with anticipation of what they would encounter, meanwhile they busied themselves with drills.

For weeks, training was continuous and included convoy operations, spotting improvised explosive devices, immediate reaction to enemy contact and live fire exercises with Howitzers, said Cpl. Kevin D. Peterson, 28, cannoneer and Thousand Oaks, Calif. native. Shortly after, word came for them to move into Iraq they began their northbound trek in convoys that included several hundred vehicles including six M198 155mm Medium Howitzers.

Their baptism into combat came within two miles of reaching the gates of Camp Fallujah. “We got contact from both sides,” said Lance Cpl. Joseph M. Benezette, 24, motor transport operator and Kansas City, Mo. native.

The unit reacted without hesitation at their first encounter with the enemy.

“Their training kicked in like acting without thinking,” added, Sgt. Michael V. McGregor,



Lance Cpl. Derek Anderson looks for help in his Iraqi phrasebook as two Iraqi soldiers look on while working security on the roof of copperhead.



Above — Lance Cpl. Joseph T. Blake (bottom) and Lance Cpl. Scott Bowles (kneeling) pose with (second row, from left) Lance Cpl. Giuliano Alano (left), Lance Cpl. Ryan Lambert, Staff Sgt. Greg Yarbrough, Gunnery Sgt. Jeff Finnegan, Lance Cpl. Everett Bishop, Cpl. Neil Campion, Lance Cpl. Mike DeShields and Lance Cpl. Nick Smith (top), all members of Charlie Battery, 1st Battalion, 12th Marine Regiment, at Camp Owen, Fallujah in early November 2004.

Right — Lance Cpl. Joe Benezette patrols near Daves Field, Fallujah, Iraq, in late January.



A series of M198 155mm Medium Howitzers used by Marines from 1st Battalion, 12th Marine Regiment, line the desert at Camp Udairi, Kuwait in late 2004.

29, artillery forward observer and Enterprise, Kan. native.

Their first firefight got hearts pumping a beat faster, but the unit suffered no casualties.

Once settled into their new home in an area within Camp Fallujah dubbed “Tent City,” the new arrivals were greeted by insurgent-fired mortar attacks. Getting used to the sounds of explosions was a bit unnerving at first but they quickly got accustomed to it, according to Peterson.

The pace quickly picked up as I MEF prepared for Operation Al Fajr and the battery was told they had two hours to get their guns ready for an attack.

Although trained as a provisional rifle company, they don’t go anywhere without their guns, according to 1st Lt. Jacob G. Johnson, 25, fire directions officer and Baxter Springs, Kan. native. They lined up their howitzers alongside other Marine Corps and Army batteries to take part in the fiercest fighting of the war, to date. For 42 days, the Hawaii-based unit fired more than 1,500 artillery rounds into the insurgent stronghold.

In order to do this they relocated to Camp Baharia, encroaching on the city to better engage the anti-coalition forces.

The pace of the battle kept them up for days at a time but they were always ready to send rounds into the city. They knew Marines were counting on the artillery from Charlie Battery, according to Lance Cpl. Joseph T. Blake, 19, cannoneer and West Salem, Ohio native.

The creature comforts were about 8,000 miles away, but at that time it didn’t matter. They were fighting for each other.

“That’s all you have out there,” said Lance Cpl. Christopher D. McLain, 20, radio operator with the forward observer team and Carson City, Nev. native.

A few days into the battle they suffered their first wounded when shrapnel from a grenade hit one of McLain’s legs and left a gash that had him down for about a day.



Lance Cpl. San Kim (left front), Lance Cpl. Everett Bishop (left back) and Lance Cpl. Jonell Ramos patrol near Daves Field in late January.

The next morning he awoke in a medical aid station, still in the city, to greetings from a Navy hospital corpsmen who said “Happy Birthday Marine,” according to McLain.

During a slight lull in the battle, somewhere across the city, his friends were able to take a few minutes to celebrate the Marine Corps birthday.

Early on Nov. 10, 2004, one of the warriors took a K-Bar and cut a piece of pound cake from a Meal Ready to Eat.

Tradition calls for cutting a cake, giving it to the oldest Marine present who, in turn, gives a piece to the youngest Marine — signifying the passing of traditions that have been part of the Marine Corps since 1775.

The celebration also included the reading of the 13th Commandant of the Marine Corps, General John A. Lejeune’s message.

This part was accomplished when one of the Marines got on the “squawk box” (a speaker used to transmit messages to the gun area) and read the message, so all could hear, simultaneously. Then, while standing at the position of attention, they joined in singing the Marine’s Hymn. After that, it was back to work.

In time the heavy bombardment dampened the insurgent’s will, the coalition forces took control of the city and the unit received a new mission.

“We moved from the guns to put up an entry control point in the outskirts of the city,” said Peterson.

Engaging in something they had not done before, the battery staff planned all aspects of their new mission.

“We did it all — from the layout to the set up, and how we were going to run it,” said Baeza.

The entry control point was located in the northern part of the city



Staff Sgt. Joshua Baeza, communications chief, Charlie Battery, 1/12, works security in North Fallujah in January.

and served as a way of monitoring any terrorists or insurgents from entering Fallujah.

Working together with the Iraqi police and female Marines, who checked the female Iraqis going into the city, they processed from approximately 1,000 to 4,000 people, daily. The men and women returning to the city had varied reactions to the Marines. Some expressed gratitude at their presence and others were not happy at the site of what had once been their homes. The Iraqi’s whose homes were damaged or destroyed were able to submit claims in order to receive monetary compensation. Many Iraqis began that process at the entry control point.

Toward the end of January, the country geared up for their first free elections and the battery received yet another mission as world headlines turned to this historic event. They would facilitate and guard a safe place for all Iraqi voters to exercise their newfound freedom.

“We moved into an athletic field and set up a polling station,” said McGregor.

Tensions could be felt as election day neared many local citizens spent much of their time inside their homes, according to Peterson.

Preparation by Iraqis and coalition forces proved successful. When the day arrived, the process was seamless.

The Marines scaled back their presence and

See CHARLIE, A-8



Vietnam op rediscovered after 30 years

Lance Cpl. T. J. Kaemmerer
MCB Camp Butler

MARINE CORPS BASE CAMP FOSTER, OKINAWA, Japan — The Marine Corps is full of tradition, and Marines pride themselves with maintaining the legacy that was created by those who served before them.

Vietnam veteran and retired Master Gunnery Sgt. Stanley E. Stewart recently recalled his experiences of April 29, 1975, during the final operation in Saigon: Operation Frequent Wind. Marines with 4th Marine Regiment aboard Camp Schwab also discovered that portion of their unit’s illustrious history.

As the situation in Vietnam deteriorated in 1975, elements of the 9th Marine Amphibious



Official U.S. Navy Photo

During Operation Frequent Wind, many natives of South Vietnam did everything they could to leave their country, April 29, 1975. More people were evacuated than the planners anticipated. They thought they would be moving about 100 people, but when it was over, more than 1,373 Americans and 5,595 foreign refugees were relocated.

Brigade, where Stewart was assigned as the communications chief, along with members of the 33rd Marine Amphibious Unit, comprised of various units including 2nd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, from Okinawa, Japan, were given the daunting responsibility of planning the evacuation of American citizens and Vietnamese refugees from Saigon.

Planning ended on April 29, when artillery rounds and rockets landed in the Defense Attaché Office compound at about 4 a.m., instantly killing two young Marines on security duty there. At approximately noon, the order was given to execute Operation Frequent Wind, explained Capt. B. A. Buckel, assistant operations officer with 4th Marines.

“All the planning for the worst-case scenario really paid off,” Buckel said. “They planned it out; went in and got the job done. The Marines were the last ones with their boots on the ground in Vietnam. I just learned about it, and it makes me even more proud to be a member of 4th Marines.”

During the evacuation, military helicopters dropped Regimental Landing Team-4, the

ground security component, at seven landing zones near the DAO compound. Once on the ground, they moved to set up security positions. With the planning detailed out to the fire team level, each Marine knew exactly where to evacuate the civilians in a smooth, orderly fashion, said Lance Cpl. Hugh D. Wood, 4th Marines’ temporary unit historian.

Though the evacuation efforts were under continuous rifle and artillery fire, the security force had no combat-related deaths or injuries. During a nearly constant barrage of explosions, the Marines loaded American and Vietnamese civilians, who feared for their lives, onto helicopters that brought them to waiting aircraft carriers. The Navy vessels brought them to the Philippines and eventually to Camp Pendleton, Calif.

“When we got on the ship, the South Vietnamese were landing helicopters right on the deck,” said Stewart, remembering his actions during the operation. “We’d take the people off and push the helicopters over the side. They tried to land (planes) on the ship and the Navy would wave them off. Then they’d ditch the planes into the ocean and jump out and the Navy would fish them out of the water. It was very hectic.”

The planners anticipated they would be moving



Official U.S. Navy Photo

South Vietnamese pilots stand by with refugees on a U.S. Navy ship, April 29, 1975, during Operation Frequent Wind. Though the evacuation efforts were under continuous rifle and artillery fire, the security force had no combat-related deaths or injuries.

about 100 people out of Saigon, but when it was over, they had relocated 1,373 Americans and 5,595 foreign refugees.

There came a point during the night when the order was given to only take American citizens because the North Vietnamese Army and Viet Cong were getting close to the DOA compound and American Embassy.

“I can’t imagine what it must have been like to have to look at those people, knowing that if they were caught they’d probably be killed,” Buckel said. “As good a feeling as it must’ve been helping the ones they could. There also had to be a little bit of guilt there too.”

The last helicopters were taking off with their Marine passengers as the drone of enemy tanks were heard coming toward the compound.

“The North Vietnamese were sitting right outside Saigon just waiting for us to leave so they could come in and take over,” Stewart said. “When we got out of there, we didn’t know where we were going. They just set us down aboard whatever ship was available. It was quite an operation. Everyone was a hero that day.”



Official U.S. Navy Photo

A South Vietnamese UH-1H is pushed overboard to make room for a Cessna O-1 landing. Operation Frequent Wind, the final operation in Saigon, began April 29, 1975. During a nearly constant barrage of explosions, the Marines loaded American and Vietnamese civilians, who feared for their lives, onto helicopters that brought them to waiting aircraft carriers. The Navy vessels brought them to the Philippines and eventually to Camp Pendleton, Calif.

MCB Hawaii prepares for hurricane season

Cpl. Michelle M. Dickson
Combat Correspondent

As the summertime finally hits, most people are thinking of hitting the beach and barbecuing. But with all of the fun activities that summer holds, it also brings the possibility of danger. Beginning in June and continuing throughout November, hurricane season will soon be in full swing, so everyone needs to be prepared in case a natural disaster occurs.

Although the last hurricane to hit Hawaii was Hurricane Iniki, in 1992, it never hurts to be prepared, according to Staff Sgt. Luis P. Valdespino, Emergency Shelter program manager, Headquarters Battalion, Marine Corps Base Hawaii, Kaneohe Bay,.

“People need to be ready because even though it has been well over 10 years since Hawaii’s last hurricane, they are unpredictable,” said the Dallas, Texas native. “Also, hurricanes are not the only natural disaster that can occur, so why not be prepared for everything that could come our way?”

The first thing everyone should be aware of is that there are shelters that are available on base that can be utilized in the event of a natural disaster.

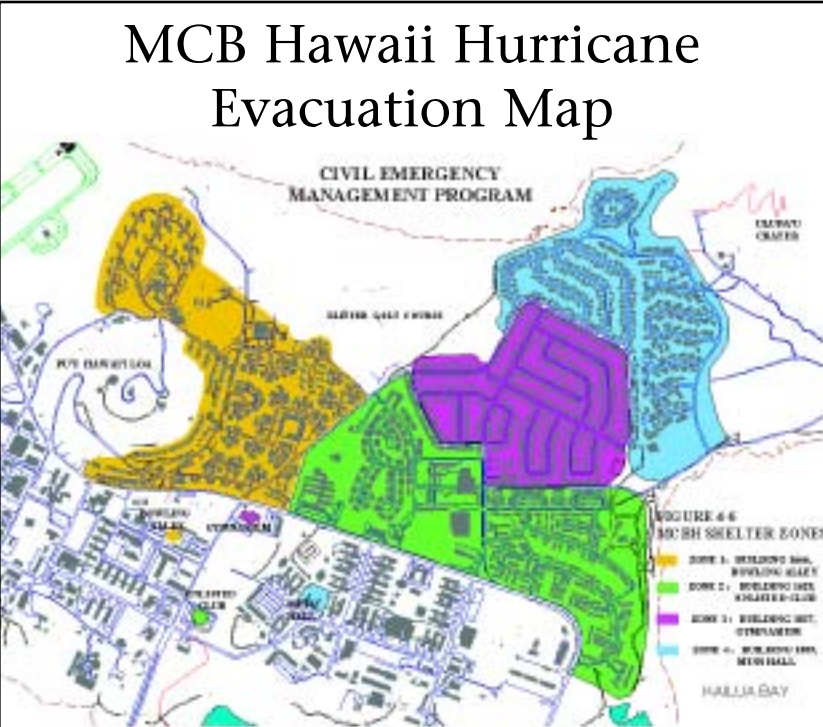
“There is an emergency shelter for every section of base housing aboard the base,” he said. “When people check into base housing, they are given a brief on where the shelters are.”

Another way to prepare for a natural disaster is to have, on hand, all of the items that would help sustain you and your family should a hurricane or other natural disaster strike.

“Flashlights, toiletries, canned foods and first aid kits are the kinds of items that people should have in their homes at all times,” said Valdespino. “Plus, if one is coming, stay informed. They can usually be tracked from a few days out, so people should have plenty of time to get them situated and have a definite plan. Hurricanes aren’t like tsunamis that just hit from out of nowhere — we are given the warn-

ings.” The base now also has an Information Awareness Campaign that promotes safety and preparedness when it comes to natural disasters. The information is available at different locations and accessible to everyone. According to Valdespino, The Base Library has displays posted, information is televised on MCB Hawaii’s Channel 2, and the MCB Hawaii Web site is an excellent source as well. The Internet also holds a great deal of information on hurricanes and other natural disasters and is available to everyone, at the Base Library.

“The key thing is to make sure that people have at least considered what important things to take care of and that your family has a plan,” said Valdespino. “Why let something be so much more costly than it needs to be? If you are prepared, something like a hurricane can be a lot less painful then it would originally be.”



Services work together

Legal branches gather for quarterly training

Pfc. Roger L. Nelson
Combat Correspondent

Joint-service legal training took place May 12 in order to provide service members assigned to jobs the legal community the opportunity to cross train on legal matters, procedures, topics and training requirements specific to each service, according to Staff Sgt. Carolyn A. Wilding, military justice chief, Legal Service Center.

Representatives from the Navy, Marines Corps, Army, Air Force and Coast Guard legal community gather on a quarterly basis and participate in this type of training.

According to Wilding, one of the main objectives is to foster good working relationships between tri-service and Coast Guard counterparts by incorporating ideas and information.

The training kicked off at 8 a.m. with a martial arts demonstration on the front lawn of the Law Center. Attendees then sat through two train-

ing classes that showcased the Marine Corps and the way its legal personnel do business. The first part concentrated on military justice and the second was a legal assistance course.

As a morale booster, training also included an organized physical training session that began with warm up exercises that progressed into a run around the base.

Following a day of formal classes, the attendees went home and donned their service dress uniforms for an evening event.

Representatives from each of the services organized the First Joint-Service JAG Military Formal, which was held at the Hale Koa Hotel in Waikiki, May 13.

The social event, which had more than 250 service members and guests in attendance, was an added way to build camaraderie while in a more relaxed environment.

The training as well as the formal served to strengthen working relationships and increase knowledge and respect for sister services. The next joint-training evolution is scheduled for August.

Green thumbs

Yard of the Quarter Winners

Command Barracks:
Mals-24 — Sgt. Deleon,
Gunnery Sgt. Charles,
Cpl. North, Sgt.
Pilkington, Cpl.
Hollamon, Cpl. Boysel,
Cpl. Wachter

Command Area:
Headquarters 1/12 —
Pfc. Cruz and Pfc.
Cieciork.

Housing areas: Sgt.
Austin and family, Cpl.
and Mrs. Syron, Mrs.
Camacho and family, Lt.
Col. and Mrs. Land, Mrs.
Bowman and family,
Mrs. Peters, Mrs. Knight
and family.



Photo Courtesy of Tenant Relations

Winners of the Yard of the Quarter contest are pictured with Brig. Gen. George J. Trautman III (center) at Anderson Hall.

Hawaii honors, awards troops

CAMP H.M. SMITH, Hawaii — Camp Smith, Kaneohe Bay Marines and other service members were honored during the final event of the 20th Annual Military Appreciation Month luncheon held at Hilton Hawaiian Village Hotel, May 18.

Six service members, to include Sgt. Victor D. Velez, Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 362, administration chief, were presented with the Aloha Spirit Award for community service above and beyond the call of duty.

The award is given to those volunteers who selflessly devote their time to worthy causes for the benefit of others, said Donald G. Horner, president and chief executive officer of First Hawaiian Bank.

Velez volunteers his time with the Big Brother program at a local middle school, helps coach Special Olympic athletes and coaches children's soccer and basketball through the Marine Corps Community Services program.

Later during the luncheon, the master of ceremonies introduced Col. Gregory Boyle, commanding officer 3rd Marine Regiment.

He, along with other keynote speakers, offered heartfelt, encouraging words to troops coming home after a job well done serving in



Cpl. Megan L. Stiner

Col. Gregory Boyle, commanding officer, 3rd Marine Regiment, speaks to the crowd about the tremendous support the military has received from the Hawaii community during the 20th Annual Military Recognition Luncheon, May 18.

CSSG-3, From A-1

working on vehicles that are older than many of the Marines.

But, if the equipment comes in broken, it goes out fixed. The Marines use the technical manuals, and, after all, an engine is an engine, Cruzrivera pointed out.

Operation Alaskan Road offers members of each branch of the service an opportunity to work with the others — something else the Marines rarely get to do at home.

On the road site, the Marines have logged thousands of man-hours during its three-week tour, making visible progress toward the final product, which is a 14.5-mile road, ready for surfacing. Excavators, dump trucks, graders, bulldozers and compactors roar, grind, push and dig, wrestling the difficult terrain into submission.

Marines stationed in Hawaii and Japan can't work with this kind of equipment at home, according to Gunny Sgt. James Darity, CSSG-3. But here, the Marines are getting plenty of experience digging in the muskeg and clearing rock.

Construction Staff Noncommissioned Officer-in-Charge Staff Sgt. Richard Arvey, CSSG-3, oversaw the culvert installation. "Excavators, trucks and Marines," he said. "All these moving parts. It sharpens my task-organization skills."

"Our young guys are getting the same experience as the older guys," said Construction Foreman Sgt. Chris Eastman, CSSG-3. Such stuff brings up a unit's proficiency very quickly.

No wonder they're "... proud to claim the title of United States Marines."

Afghanistan and Iraq.

Boyle commended the returning Marines of 1st Battalion, 3rd Marines by saying, "Their courageous efforts through the intense fighting in Iraq is comparable to Hue City during the Vietnam War."

Boyle continued by thanking all of the loved ones for supporting their service member.

The Hawaii Chamber of Commerce, First Hawaiian Bank, and an ocean transportation company, Alexander & Baldwin Inc., sponsored the luncheon that featured award presentations, guest speakers, a free three-course meal and live music for attendees.

"It was nice to see that the

civilians took that much time and effort to plan this luncheon and other events for the military and their families through the whole month of May," said Cpl. Shane D. Oltman, property accountant.

Throughout Hawaii Military Appreciation Month there were many events such as the opening ceremony next to the USS Missouri and free admission to museums and the local zoo for service members and their families.

At the close of the luncheon, service members were prompted to stand for each service's hymn. Velez and the rest of the Marines stood proudly at attention in honor of all the services.



Singin' in the hall

Mari Hayes, entertainer for Navatek I, dances as Jan Shima of 7th Sign Music performs contemporary Hawaiian songs during the Asian-Pacific American Heritage Month luncheon at Anderson Hall, Tuesday. A room full of smiling Marines, Sailors, family members and friends enjoyed the show for about 30 minutes. The noon meal menu included egg foo young, egg rolls, pork chop suey, beef sukiyaki and stir fry. After lunch, Cmdr. Clement Tanaka, executive officer of Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 24 shared a bit of Asian-Pacific American history with the audience of more than 100. Mokapu Elementary students received awards for the Asian-Pacific American Heritage month coloring contest.

Sgt. Joseph A. Lee

Window honors Chosin Few

**Retired Master Gunnery
Sgt. Bob Talmadge
and Retired Lt. Col. Thomas Kalus**
MCB Hawaii

In Korea, in late November and early December of 1950, a 15,000 Commandos — consisting of the 1st Marine Division, remnants of the U.S. Army's 31st Infantry Regiment, and a company of British Marine Commandos — was segmented and surrounded by 12 Chinese divisions, made up of approximately 120,000 Chinese Communist soldiers.

By December 8, 1950, the allied force, challenged by a blinding Siberian blizzard and nighttime temperatures of minus 40 degrees Fahrenheit, had fought its way over 24 miles of snow and treacherous ice-covered dirt roads in the rugged Taebaek Mountains in the area of the Changjin Reservoir to the small hamlet of Koto-ri, located at the 4,000-foot level.

The allied force, led by Marines, make preparations that day to attack enemy forces the next morning, December 9, 1950, and fight their way to the sea. Clear skies would be needed so that friendly aircraft could provide air cover. Hope for good weather was slim, however, as the blizzard continued unabated during the day and into the night, many prayers were said for clear skies the following day.

Shortly before 10 p.m., the winds and snow subsided and a small area of sky began to lighten, revealing a lone, brightly shining star. Cries of “There’s a star!” echoed throughout the entire perimeter, followed by shouting, singing and prayers being said out loud.

The story goes that Col. Alpha Bowser, G-3/Operations Officer, 1st Marine Division, stepped out of his tent shortly after the star appeared, to determine the source of all the commotion. He could hear Marines in warm-up tents loudly singing The Marines Corps Hymn and shouting encouragement to one another. As Bowser stepped back inside the command tent, he asked Maj. Gen. Oliver Prince Smith, Commanding General, 1st Marine Division, “What made the Chinese think they could defeat men with that kind of morale?”

The general replied, “Bowser, the Chinese never had a chance.”

The following morning, the skies were clear and glistening, almost blinding, thick white snow covering the ground. Fighter and bomber aircraft soon arrived to provide the necessary close-air support. In battle that day and the next, the 1st Marine Division-led force broke free of the icy grip of both weather and enemy to complete the march to the Korean port city of Hungnam, and freedom.

During the 14 days of torturous battle — in weather at least equal to, if not worse than that experienced during the Revolutionary War at Valley Forge — the allied force virtually destroyed six divisions of Chinese Army forces and battered four of the six others. Today, members of The Chosin Few, Inc. — an organization of veterans who fought at the Chosin Reservoir — proudly wear the logo of “The Star O’er Koto-ri” to recall the significance of that first star the night of December 8, 1950.



Photo Courtesy of Bob Talmadge

One of the five stained-glass windows at the new Base Chapel is dedicated to The Chosin Few, survivors of a historic battle in Korea nearly 55 years ago.

At 10 a.m., June 3, the new Base Chapel will be dedicated on Marine Corps Base Hawaii, Kaneohe Bay. One of its five stained-glass windows will be dedicated to The Chosin Few, survivors of that historic battle in Korea nearly 55 years ago.

The purple, red and blue colors in the seven- by 14-foot window represent the terrible weather of that time; the white center represents the clearing skies; and in

the center of the window stands the logo of The Chosin Few, the Star O’er Koto-ri.

Chosin campaign and award ribbons appear in reverse order from the inside of the chapel, as the window is designed to be viewed from outside. The story of The Star O’er Koto-ri will appear on a plaque donated by the Aloha Chapter of The Chosin Few.

Retired Navy Capt. Joseph W. Estabrook, MCB Hawaii command chaplain during the chapel and stain-glass window planning and design phases, will visit Hawaii to help dedicate the new chapel. Now serving as a

bishop with the Archdiocese for the Military Services USA in Washington, he credits Retired Lt. Col. Tom Kalus, and former MCB Hawaii Commanding General Jerry C. McAbee with The Chosin Few window design. Thanks to their dedication and foresight, The Chosin Few’s window within the completed Base Chapel will remind all visitors of the battle and of the star of Koto-ri.

MarForPac Band Schedule

Today, 10 a.m.
Navy Retirement For
Lead Chief Petty
Officer Keller
Brass Quintet
USS Missouri,
Pearl Harbor

Sunday, 5:30 p.m.
Vietnam Veterans
Candlelight Memorial
Day Ceremony
Ceremonial Band
National Memorial
Cemetery of the Pacific
The Marine Forces
Pacific Band schedule of
performances is available
on the Web at
www.mfp.usmc.mil/mfpband/main.htm.

FALLEN, From A-1

emerged to motivate and inspire the Marines around them. Nick and Ricky loved us so much that they gave their lives to ensure our safety on the mountain that day. We can never begin to repay the debt we owe to them. Our hearts and thoughts go out to their families. Know that your sons are heroes,” Campbell concluded.

Next, Lance Cpl. Nicholas Collier, Kilo rifleman, spoke to the assembled Marines, Sailors, Airmen and Soldiers.

“Friend. That word is an understatement. Brother, more appropriately, is what he is and always will be,” he began. “Nick was one of those people you are immediately attracted to — a personality that was larger than life. He had a magnetic aura around him that automatically drew you to him. He could make a bad time good and a good time better.”

Collier related stories of the time Kirven managed to scoop supermodel Brooke Burke away from her NFL-playing boyfriend on the dance floor in Waikiki, and another time, he convinced an entire club that he and his friends was the rock band “Incubus.”

He also spoke of his selflessness and caring for others. “These traits undoubtedly came from those he held closest to him — his family. There wasn’t a day that went by that he didn’t tell a story about time spent at James Madison University with his sister Pride, or how crazy his father Rusty is, or a vacation with his older brother Joe, or how loving a home his mother Beth, stepfather Michael and brother Joseph have.”

“I learned how not to squander your time here,” he continued. “Even if you live to 150, it’s still not long enough to accomplish everything. He lived by the motto ‘No day wasted; no experience unfulfilled.’ We celebrate a life lived without limits, without regrets and we rejoice. In our happiness is where Nick lives on forever.”

The final speaker was Cpl. Nathan Valencia, Kilo rifleman.

“I had never met anyone like Ricky before, the kind of person who made you laugh

no matter what,” he began. “I asked myself, ‘How much better of a person am I because of him?’

“We were total opposites. He was a country boy from Louisiana who liked to drive a Jeep in the mud and go fishing. I’m a city boy from Chicago who never experienced those things. Hanging out with Ricky, I learned so much: How to drive stick shift in his Jeep, how to chop wood. I even learned to like country music and that appearances aren’t always what they seem.”

Valencia spoke both of Schoener’s easy-going kindness and drive to do the very best at everything he did.

“I looked up the definition of ambition and it said ‘a desire to succeed.’ Ricky was the most ambitious person I ever met. He put his heart into everything he did, all the time. I thank him for that and for opening my eyes to a different world.”

He concluded, “My prayers go out to Ricky’s mom and family, I hope they know he will never be forgotten.”

After the playing of “Taps,” the company was dismissed to pay their final respects to Nick and Ricky. The Marines and Sailors who served with them gathered close around their rifles

and boots, touching the dog tags and remembering the laughter their friends say Kirven and Schoener would most like to be remembered by.

Three Marines stood to the side, playing “Amazing Grace” on the guitar and “Irish Whistle” as the crowd thinned. Almost an hour later, their rifles stood alone on the parade deck, allowed to rest as much as the Marines themselves who dedicated their lives to bringing joy to their brothers in arms are now allowed to.

“I remember Nick giving away toys, candy, food, whatever he had to the local kids when we would be out on patrol,” said Collier. “I remember him looking at their smiles and saying, ‘See, it really makes it all worthwhile.’”

The two Marines were killed in fighting in the Laghman Province of Afghanistan on May 8.

Kirven, from Fairfax, Va., was 21-years-old. His father Leo Kirven, his mother Beth, sister Mary-Pride, brothers Joe Purcell and Joseph Belle, and stepfather Mike Belle survive him. Schoener of Hayes, La., was 22 and is survived by an extended family including his mother, Bonnie Breaux.

AWARD, From A-1

culturally rich lands under its control, while supporting combat readiness. The effective use of pollution prevention practices is a vital key to mission support and essential in conserving valuable military resources, while strengthening the trust of the local community. The award reflects teamwork of everyone on the base.

Some of the notable accomplishments that garnered the award were diverting more than 55,000 pounds of hazardous

material from disposal, saving \$1.4 million in fiscal years 2003 and 2004. Use of the base Water Reclamation Facility effluent for golf course irrigation saved 240 million gallons of potable water, equating to an annual savings of \$336 thousand. Implementing environmentally sensitive equipment eliminated the need for toxic chemicals. The Facilities Energy Management Program saved \$1.2 million annually and reduced annual emissions by 2.4 million pounds. Successful implementation of these pollution prevention initiatives not only

achieved compliance with environmental regulations, it also improved combat readiness through increased efficiency.

MCB Hawaii has won more than 30 Secretary of the Navy and Secretary of Defense environmental awards in the past 30 years. With effective program management, stakeholder involvement, and innovative ideas, MCB Hawaii continues to set the standard for environmental stewardship and sustainability, while providing uncompromising support to our nation’s defense.



Photo Courtesy of Jon Chun

MCB Hawaii Environmental Department Pollution Prevention Team members pose for a photo at Pyramid Rock to celebrate their winning the Secretary of the Navy Environmental Award for fiscal year 2003 and 2004. From left — Hazardous Waste Program Manager Pat Oshiro, Pollution Prevention Environmental Protection Specialist Karen Balabis, Pollution Prevention Program Manager Carolyn Irvin and Hazardous Materials Center and Base Hazardous Waste Accumulation Site Project Manager Gerald Schmitz.

BROTHERS, *From A-1*

the shirt off their back, but never ones to take any situation too seriously or let you be down.”

The other Marines agreed, every man sharing stories of Kirven and Schoener's incredible ability to make the best out of any situation, their irrepressible spirits and their love of their families.

“We were in this place called Paitak,” said Lance Cpl. Nick Collier, rifleman and close friend of Kirven, “and it must have been 20 below and we were miserable. Nick came up to me and started taking stupid pictures of us just to relieve the misery. By the time we were done, I’d forgotten just how bad of a time it was. That’s the kind of guy he was.”

Kirven was well known for being a practical joker, and for his flashy style of dress and concern for his looks. Squad members jokingly called him “Paris” and teased him for the time he spent fixing his hair. But his Marines, and his superiors alike, also knew him as a strong leader and a proficient instructor in his specialties as an assault climber and a Marine Corps Water Survival Instructor.

“He was a great teacher,” recalled Staff Sgt. James Horvath, second platoon sergeant, Kilo Company. “He taught me how to be a better swimmer at 3-3 in about 10 minutes. He had that maturity to handle and instruct all levels of Marines and all levels of abilities.”

“We also had him as a team leader,” continued Horvath, “usually a noncommissioned officer’s billet, but in our line of work, you have to put the right man in there to do the job, and he was the right man.”

“He was one of the original ‘Kilo guys,’” said 1st Sgt. Vincent Santiago, Kilo Company’s first sergeant, referring to Kirven’s two-deployment tenure with the company. “He was always joyful, always had a smile for everyone. I remember sitting down with him for lunch and discussing his future. He told me that he was considering staying with Kilo for another deployment, helping to mentor the younger Marines. When a Marine makes statements like that, you know he really cares about those around him.”

Cpl. Schoener, or “Ricky” to his friends, is remembered as an intellectual young man who read voraciously and always had a story to share for any situation.

Schoener came to Kilo Company in August of 2004, just in time to begin training for deployment to Afghanistan. After spending the first part of his enlistment in Marine Corps Security Forces as a sentry at King’s Bay Naval Submarine Base in Georgia, Kilo Company Marines said he made the transition to his new “grunt” unit seamlessly.

“He didn’t have problems transitioning his style of leadership to work in Kilo,” said Horvath. “Without ‘trying to force a round peg in a square hole,’ he integrated his prior skills into what we did,” he continued, referring to the valuable knowledge of close-quarters battle Schoener possessed.

Other Marines mentioned his prowess as a pitcher in their flight-line games of pick-up baseball and his glowing talk of family from his small-Louisiana town.

“He adored his sister and his mom,” said one Marine. “He was always talking about them and how he couldn’t wait to get home to see them.”

The hours that changed the lives of everyone surrounding these two young men were a final testament to the strength of their character and spirit.

When Schoener and Kirven led the way toward the lifeless body of an insurgent and were fired on from a nearby cave with automatic weapons, wounding both, their squad said they never wavered. As their fellow Marines opened fire on the cave, both men continued fighting the fortified enemy until the blast from two enemy grenades took their lives.

The rest of the platoon continued the assault, clearing the cave of enemy fighters and trying to resuscitate the fallen Marines.

With helicopters unable to reach their position, the Marines and hospital corpsmen of 2nd Platoon were forced to make an arduous journey

through the mountains back to their patrol base, humping for miles while low on ammunition, out of water, and under continuing fire from the enemy. They carried Schoener and Kirven the entire way.

“They would not let go of their brothers,” said Sgt. Rob Campbell, 2nd Squad leader. “We could only walk maybe a few hundred feet or so before we had to switch guys up, but we would

never leave them behind. They’d have done the same for us.”

“These Marines are a family. Those two were the kind of men whose Marines refused to put them down — even though they looked like they couldn’t possibly take another step,” said Horvath. “That says a lot about a man.”

A few nights later, a Marine aimed a projector at the side of a tent and showed pictures and

movies of Nick and Ricky to a group huddled around the glowing, makeshift screen.

For another night with Kilo Company, two Marines who were always “larger than life” were laughed and smiled along with, the memory and celebration of their lives sustaining their Marines again. It's reflected indelibly across every face that no Marine or Sailor who served alongside them will ever be the same.